

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 121
By Burchett

A RESOLUTION to designate songwriting as one of Tennessee's official art forms.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should acknowledge and take pride in indigenous art forms that enrich the culture and tradition of the State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, songwriting is an American art form with a rich culture and heritage in Tennessee; songs written in the Volunteer State in every genre of music - from country, pop, and rock to the blues, bluegrass, rhythm and blues, gospel, soul, and show tunes - have inspired the world; songwriting and music are indispensable pieces of the total identity of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, since the inception of our statehood on June 1, 1796, Tennessee has played an instrumental role in the growth, development, and burgeoning popularity of various forms of American music; and

WHEREAS, the Bluff City of Memphis is both the birthplace and cradle of the blues, having produced numerous legendary blues performers and songwriters, including the great B. B. King; and

WHEREAS, Memphis is also the home of Sun Records, which launched the careers of many rock'n' roll legends, including "The Killer," Jerry Lee Lewis, and "The Man in Black," Johnny Cash, who are outstanding songwriters in their own right; and

WHEREAS, Memphis is also notable as a quality purveyor of gospel, rhythm and blues, and jazz, and is the home of the inspirational soul man, the Reverend Al Green and the audacious Isaac Hayes; the incredible Tina Turner hails from just down the road apiece in Nutbush, Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, to the east, Nashville is known worldwide as "Music City, USA" and is the home of country music, the Grand Ole Opry, and some of the world's most renowned songwriters: from the legendary Hank Williams, Johnny Cash, Loretta Lynn, Kris Kristofferson, and Vince Gill to the lesser known, but also great, Don Schlitz, Bobby Russell, Kenny O'Dell, Roger Cook, Wayne Kirkpatrick and Gordon Kennedy, Mark D. Sanders and Tia Sillars, and a legion of others; and

WHEREAS, the heritage of country music is both voluminous in content and proud in its accomplishments; it is indeed inspiring to trace the history of this most American form of music, from "The Father of Country Music," Jimmie Rogers, to Alan Jackson, and find that all roads lead through Nashville; and

WHEREAS, Nashville is also a Mecca for recording artists and songwriters; whether they be inclined toward country, rock'n' roll, blues, or R&B; the fact that Elvis Presley recorded many famous sides at RCA's legendary Studio B where Bob Dylan also recorded "Nashville Skyline" pays tribute to our city that eats, breathes, and sleeps music; and

WHEREAS, the escalating popularity of country music throughout the world has created an immensely talented community of songwriters in Nashville that rivals New York's Tin Pan Alley of the 1940s and 1950s; and

WHEREAS, in addition to aesthetic considerations, the songwriter's art form contributes significantly to Tennessee's economic health and well being through the payment of music royalties; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pay tribute to those thousands of individuals who have enriched the history and culture of this State through the gift of songwriting; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we hereby designate songwriting as one of Tennessee's official art forms and applaud those individuals who are or who have been skillful masters of this timeless art form.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State is directed to include a summary of the information contained in this resolution, specifically mentioning the designation of songwriting as one of Tennessee's official art forms, in the next published edition of the *Tennessee Blue Book*.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy, and that an enrolled copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Secretary of State.